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ABSTRACT

Literacy training is the first step in citizenship education for democratic empowerment. This report examines empowerment of individuals through community education and applies those lessons to Appalachia. The South Carolina Sea Island Citizenship Schools were formed and supported during the 1950s by the Highlander Folk School (Monteagle, Tennessee) to provide literacy training for blacks in South Carolina who were required to read a section of the state constitution to register to vote. The first teachers developed techniques relevant to the unique needs of these students, using vocabulary and spelling lists from their everyday language. Spread of the schools was rapid and within five years there were 700 teachers and 50,000 new voters. "Empowerment" means people learn to recognize and address injustice in their own lives. Examination of letters, tapes, and interviews shows that students, teachers and others in the Sea Island communities were empowered through the Citizenship Schools. Appalachian residents can learn from this experience in an isolated poor area similar to their own. Four needs for Appalachian residents are cited: people must learn to identify their own problems; to ask questions about the differences between democratic ideals and realities; to act, working together; and to find and develop courageous teachers who will help students satisfy the first three needs. (DHP)

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DEMOCRATIC EMPOWERMENT AND THE SOUTH CAROLINA SEA ISLAND CITIZENSHIP SCHOOLS: IMPLICATIONS FOR APPALACHIAN SCHOOLS

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DEMOCRATIC EMPOWERMENT AND THE SOUTH CAROLINA SEA ISLAND CITIZENSHIP SCHOOLS: IMPLICATIONS FOR APPALACHIAN SCHOOLS

> The public schools in this country should be at the forefront of the battle to create a more sensitive, responsive, and responsible society.
>
> -Eliot Wigginton (1985)

The purpose of this presentation is to talk about an old problem from a different perspective. The problem is how to empower people in Appalachian to gain more control over their lives. The different perspective is furnished by the South Carolina Sea Island Citizenship Schools, a literacy program established and directed by Highlander Folk School[1] in 1957. The initial goal of the schools was to help black adults meet the literacy requirements for voter registration in South Carolina; however, the more far-reaching goal was citizenship education for democratic empowerment. My presentation has three purposes. First, I will tell the story of the Sea Island Citizenship Schools. Second, I will define empowerment. Third, I will discuss the Citizenship Schools and empowerment as they apply to education in Appalalchia.

The Citizenship School Story

The Citizenship School story is told by examining three dimensions: the place, the times, and the personalities involved in establishing the schools. The place is the South Carolina Sea Islands which are part of a chain of coastal islands that extend from the southern border of North Carolina to the northern border of Florida. Johns Island, the largest and site of the first Citizenship School, is 36 miles long by 30 miles wide and is located six miles south of

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[1]Highlander Folk School was established in 1932 in Monteagle, Tennessee. In 1961 the school lost its charter when the state of Tennessee charged it with selling liquor without a license and violating Tennessee's segregation laws. In 1961 Myles Horton took out a new charter for Highlander Research and Education Center which is located in New Market, Tennessee, 20 miles east of Knoxville.

Charleston, South Carolina. Citizenship Schools were also started on Wadmalaw and Edisto Islands, both south of Johns Island (Twining & Baird, 1980; Tjerandson, 1980).

Until recently the majority of the population on the Sea Islands were black descendants of former slaves who worked on huge rice and cotton plantations. Historically they have engaged in truck farming and raising cotton on small farms that they own. A majority of blacks have owned land since Reconstruction, but their isolation from the mainland for hundreds of years has created a "people [who] have been substantially by-passed by the mainstream of American life and development" according to Herman Blake (1961). This isolation has meant poor education, poor health care and little economic opportunity. Today bridges have eliminated the physical isolation, but the culture of an earlier time remains. For example, Gullah, a language composed of standard English, archaic English, corruptions of English words and African words can still be heard today: "Old-time talk we still de talkem here!" (Blockson, 1987).

Today many young blacks leave the islands and subsistence farming to work in cities on the mainland. The old culture is gradually disappearing, due partly to outside white real estate corporations developing the land for recreation and retirement. Although these developments offer employment for some of the island blacks, they also threaten the sea island culture: "The islanders' ineffectiveness in resisting the often reckless advances of developers must be laid at the door of the very insularity that for so long protected their culture." (Jones-Jackson & Joyner, 1987).

Isolation, outside ownership of land, and language differences are also themes that affect people in Appalachia. In Appalachia it is mountains, not islands, that contribute to physical and cultural isolation. In Appalachia about 75% of the surface acres and 80% of the mineral acres are owned by outside

mineral interests or by the government (Egerton, 1981). The chief difference between the two cultures is race. In addition to many of the problems historically affecting Appalachian people, Sea Island residents were discriminated against because of color.

One effect of discrimination was the disenfranchisement of blacks on the Sea Islands and throughout the rest of the South beginning in the late 19th century. Devices such as the grandfather clause, the white primary, the poll tax and the literacy test were created to keep southern politics free of black influence. By the 1950s there were few black registered voters on the Sea Islands because there were few literate black adults. On Johns Island about 10% of the black residents were registered to vote, about the same number were literate (U.S. Dept of Commerce, 1960).

The second dimension of the Citizenship School story, the times, were characterized by problems other than lack of voting power. In the 1950s, according to reports of George Kearney (1955), Myles and Zilphia Horton (1954; 1955), Guy Carawan (1966), Septima Clark (1955; 1959), and others who lived on or visited the islands during the 1950s, education, jobs, discrimination, and health presented serious problems. Black schools were old, crowded and drafty in the winter. The teachers had few supplies and attendance was sporadic because of the growing season. Venereal disease was epidemic. There were many unwed young mothers, most of whom knew little about child care. Poor sanitation and health habits led to almost continuous cases of hookwork and skin rashes. Black farmers had to go through middle men to sell their produce. Since many of them were illiterate, they were often cheated. And, of course, everything was segregated: churches, stores, schools, parks, and beaches.

Four personalities, the third dimension, are also crucial to understanding the development of the schools. These personalities are: Myles Horton, a white, "radical hillbilly" and director and co-founder of Highlander Folk School

Septima Clark , a black schoolteacher from Charleston; Esau Jenkins, a black bus driver and farmer from Johns Island; and Bernice Robinson, a black beautician and seamstress from Charleston and Clark's cousin.

Myles Horton and Don West co-founded Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee, in 1932. Under Horton's leadership, the school became known throughout the South first as a school for labor organizers and by the 1950s as a school for civil rights. Adults came to Highlander to learn from other adults who were working on problems in their communities. At Highlander they ate together, sang together and learned from each other. Highlander measured the success of its programs by the activities of its students when they went back to their communities. Highlander was established as a school for social change, a school that would upset the status quo in the South. Myles Horton, with his vision for a better world, his belief in people as determiners of their own destiny, and his drive to convince others of the rightness of his views is a key factor in Highlander's success and the success of the Citizenship Schools.

Septima Clark, a black school teacher from Charleston became Highlander's Director of Education after she was fired from her teaching job in South Carolina for being a member of the NAACP. As a former teacher from Johns Island, she was aware of the education and political needs of the Sea Islands. She invited Esau Jenkins, a black leader from Johns Island to a Highlander workshop in Monteagle, Tennessee, in 1954. Out of this workshop the Citizenship Schools began.

Jenkins, a self-educated bus driver and farmer, had been attempting to increase the number of black voters by teaching them the section of the South Carolina Constitution that they needed to know for voter registration. But this was a tedious process, and he could not teach 2,000 people to read and write. At the 1954 workshop he asked Horton to help him establish schools to teach people to read and write in order to vote. Horton agreed. Jenkins would provide

the local leadership and the place; Highlander would provide the funds through the Field Foundation and the Schwartzhaupt Foundation (Tjerandson, 1980).

The next step was finding a teacher. Horton recommended that a black man or woman with knowledge of the islands but no formal training as a teacher be found. Earlier efforts by the public schools to start adult education classes on Johns Island had failed because black adults had found that admitting their illiteracy to college-educated whites and learning to read books intended for children to be humiliating. Bernice Robinson, an NAACP recruiter, was exactly the teacher Horton had in mind.

Teaching the Disenfranchised

Robinson began teaching in January, 1957, in the back of a cooperative store organized by Jenkins and other island residents. On the evening of her first classd she told her students: "I'm not really going to be your teacher. We're going to work together and teach each other" (Robinson, 1986). She asked her students what they wanted to learn and then developed her own teaching materials to meet those needs. Her students wanted to fill out order blanks for catalogues, to read the newspaper, to read letters from their children, to do simple arithmetic, to read the Bible, and to register to vote.

Robinson developed a number of techniques that proved successful with adults. She taught them to write their names using the kinesthetic method. She made reading relevant to their needs. She developed vocabulary and spelling lists from words they needed to know from the South Carolina Constitution and their everyday lives. Words such as "tomato", "cotton", "register", and "imprisonment" were considered more relevant to their lives than cat, dog, Dick and Jane. She asked them to tell her stories about their work in the fields and their homes. Then she put their stories on paper and had the students learn to read them, she said, "This is your story. We're going to learn how to read your story" (Robinson, 1986). Robinson knew this was a good

way to teach, without ever hearing of the "language experience" approach to reading. Math was made relevant by using grocery ads and problems with practical application: "How much do you expect to receive when you sell your crops?" Later Robinson and Clark combined resources and methods to create My Citizenship Booklet (1961-2). One story problem, not likely to be found in standard math texts, reads as follows: "Ten students were arrested in the sit-in movement and were fined $75 a piece. How much fine was paid?" (p. 13).

By 1959 Robinson was teaching students songs to help them learn. Music became a regular part of the classes through the work of Guy Carawan, Highlander's music director. Carawan and his wife Candie recorded songs that were part of the islanders heritage such as "Michael, Row Your Boat Ashore" which had originated in the islands in the 1850s. (Carawan, 1960-1; Tape 515A, 1960). Myles Horton once said that in addition to action, people "need something to cultivate the spirit and the soul." Music was that "something" both at Highlander and at the Citizenship Schools.

By February, 1958, Robinson had taught two classes on Johns Island and all 26 students[1] who had attended all five months, registered to vote by reading a paragraph from the South Carolina Constitution and writing their own names. The classes had met twice a week for two hours a night. Adult students, some of whom could not write their names when they began, passed the literacy test after only 80 hours of classes (Tjerandsen, 1980).

The new voters on Johns Island influenced others to get their certificates. Before long, Johns Island was "infested with voters", and word spread to adjoining islands, Wadmalaw and Edisto, and to North Charleston. Expansion was what Horton wanted also, and it coincided with additional grant money

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[1]The reports on the number of students who registered range from 14 to 37 (Tjerandsen, 1980; Glen, 1986).

from the Schwartzhaupt Foundation. Potential leaders on these islands were identified and they attended a workshop at Highlander (Franson, 1978; Tjerandsen, 1980).

The class on Wadmalaw was taught by Ethel Grimball, Esau Jenkin's daughter, in a small building belonging to the Presbyterian Church. Grimball was a college-educated teacher but had close ties to the people of Johns and Wadmalaw Islands. Although she developed her own methods, Grimball, as Robinson, was tuned in to the needs of the students who wanted to read and write, do arithmetic, and to learn to sew or crochet (Grimball, 1987).

A class was started on Edisto Island in 1958 by Alleen Brewer (now Wood). Brewer was a social worker from the Presbyterian Church, which, in turn, furnished a meeting place. Although 38 men and women enrolled (the largest class so far), Brewer met the challenge by grouping students so that they could help each other. She also taught reading, writing, arithmetic, citizenship, sewing and leather craft, history of the United States and the civil rights movement based on expressed student needs. (Tape 515A, 1961b; Brewer, 1960; Clark, 1962). For many of the students on Edisto, the social part of each class session was extremely important. One man said, "Now we don't have to wait until Sunday to fellowship together" (Clark, 1962, p. 159).

From December, 1958-February, 1959, four citizenship schools were held on Edisto Island, Johns Island, Wadmalaw Island, and in North Charleston. With 106 students enrolled in these new classes, ranging in age from 15 to 76, Bernice Robinson became a supervisor, overseeing the development of new classes. By the end of the school term, 86 students were registered to vote (Tjerandsen, 1980, p. 167).

The students' responses to these early classes were very positive. Most wanted the classes to continue. Student comments were recorded on tape and some wrote letters to the teachers and to Highlander.

-I enjoyed the school very good and I hope it will be a little longer if its able to continue. -Ms. Wright, Johns Island (Tape 807A, 1957)

-The adult school means so much to me I cannot express my appreciation and thoughts by words. The only think I am so sorry the school terms was so short. I would like to thank our teacher Mrs. Brewer for helping us out so wonderful in sewing, arithmetic.
-Minnie R. Washington, Edisto Island (Letters, 1959)

In 1959-1960, 182 adults enrolled in Citizenship School classes on Johns Island, Promise Land (northern section of Johns Island), Wadmalaw, Edisto, and North Charleston; 65 became registered voters. By March, 1960, there were 200 black voters on Edisto, up from 40 in 1958. Johns Island black voters had increased by 300% from 1956 to 1960. In 1960-1961 classes were held in North Charleston, Edisto and Wadmalaw and 105 out of 111 black students registered to vote. In 1960-1, Bernice Robinson and Septima Clark organized eight classes in Huntsville, Alabama, and Savannah, Georgia. By the end of this session 245 students, ranging in age from 17-65, had attended the Citizenship School classes, and 232 had registered to vote (Tjerandsen, 1980; Glen, 1986; HFS, 1960; HFS, 1960-1, HFS, 1961).

The Citizenship Schools plus the teacher training workshops Highlander had developed were transferred to the SCLC with Highlander remaining as a consultant for the program. Andrew Young, who had joined the Highlander staff earlier that year, and Septima Clark went to the SCLC to organize the schools along with Dorothy Cotton of the SCLC. Bernice Robinson remained at Highlander and acted as a consultant to the SCLC (Glen, 1986).

The spread of the schools under the SCLC was rapid. By September, 1963, there were 700 teachers and 50,000 new voters who could be traced to the Citizenship School movement (Clark, 1963). These figures represent dramatic growth considering the humble beginning on Johns Island with 14 students and one inexperienced teacher. But voter registration is only one part of the

story. Highlander's goal was that the Citizenship School students would become leaders in their communities, "empowered citizens", who would address problems of health, education, jobs and discrimination.

Empowerment: Exploring Definitions

According to John Pickles (1985) we cannot talk meaningfully about empowerment until we focus on the places and commonplaces in our lives. Empowerment must be grounded in real communities and schools. Pickles points out that education should:

> engage students in a dialogue with the commonplaces of their world in order that they can 1) understand them and old on to the commonplaces which are significant; 2) transcend those commplaces which are parochial and constraining; and 3) change those commonplaces which they judge to be wrong.

Pickles then argues that students should be able to work together with others to identify principles and values through which they can control change. In other words, students must analyze power and control in the places and commonplaces of their lives, and reflect on these relationships before democratic empowerment can be addressed.

Henry Giroux (1978) does not use the term "commonplaces" but makes a point similar to Pickles when he argues that students need to see the value and legitimacy of their own "cultural capital" before they can enter into dialogue with others. But in order for such discussion to lead to empowerment, students must go beyond the reflective inquiry that Pickles advocates. Giroux (1983) argues that students must engage in "emancipatory rationality", defined as "criticizing that which is restrictive and oppressive while at the same time supporting action in the service of individual freedom and well-being".

Giroux's ideas are influenced by the thinking of Paulo Freire. Freire (1972) argues that education should be a liberating process not a

domesticating (conforming, restrictive) one. Liberation takes place through dialogue between student and teacher. The students and teachers work together to become aware of oppressive situations in society, politics, and economics and begin to discuss how to take action to change these situations. Applying Freire's ideas to a definition of empowerment, education must include the student as a participant, engage that student in dialogue on issues of concern to the student, and encourage the student to reflect on these problems and to plan to take action against them.

But how can teachers and students become convinced that they can shape their social, political and economic reality? According to Sissela Bok (Kidder, 1986) we must teacher that one person can make a difference. According to Bok, an individual can "spark an action" that can lead to a larger movement. Bok points out that major problems in society must be addressed by individuals who belief that they have the power to affect change by working together for common goals. Robert Bellah and associates in Habits of the Heart (1985) stress that Americans should be looking for common ground, for values that they share. The search for common ground would begin with local efforts. "These local initiatives may, however, be thr forerunners of social movements that will once again open up spaces for reflection, participation, and the transformation of our institutions." Viewed from this perspective, empowerment has both a personal and a public dimension.

In 1981 Myles Horton used the word empower in explaining Highlander's purpose. "We try to empower people to take more control over their lives" (Moyers, 1981). Horton points out that at Highlander the subject matter may range from labor issues to civil rights to multinational corporations, but the purpose remains the same, "to help people become so empowered that they can begin to have something to do with their lives." Horton (1973) also stressed that people must be able to see beyond "what is", to try to envision a better

world and to look for universal principles that apply to all cultures. Empowerment, according to Horton, is a creative process which enables people to be participants in shaping a better world.

My definition of empowerment has been influenced by the ideas of the people I have been discussing, especially those of Myles Horton. It is a synthesis of these ideas but includes my understanding of empowerment as applied to the Citizenship Schools as well. Empowerment in a democratic society means:

1) believing that people can be effective in addressing injustice and oppression in their lives,
2) asking questions about the differences between democratic ideas and the realities of society,
3) acting to change society based on universal principles of benefit to all.

The key question to address is: Did the Citizenship Schools empower people?

Empowerment and the Citizenship Schools

First, there is evidence that as a result of the schools people began to identify their problems by looking critically at their own culture and history. Many of the students had acquired "learned helplessness". They believed that it was better for whites to make the big decisions about politics and that black had no need to vote. Robinson, however, validated their backgrounds and helped them believe that their ideas and experiences had worth. She said that they would learn together, therefore, encouraging students see that they had a responsibility in the learning process. She also tried to open their minds to a bigger world. She thought that learning to read and write shed light on the lives of the people who were formerly illiterate. Students were encouraged to use local resouces. Knowing where to get help was an essential step in helping students begain to solve their own problems.

The second step in the empowerment process is critical awareness, developing skepticism. Esau Jenkins showed students how their religion fit into the Citizenship School classes. He said that they could honor the Lord by becoming active citizens and that a good Christian was not passive but took an active role and addressed problems (Tape 515A, 1960).

Students became also more aware of problems in their culture such as lack of political power, apathy, fear of whites, and poor schools. Robinson posted the the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in her classroom. Although the rights in the document were supported by the United States for the rest of the world, they were not a reality for many poor people and minorities in the United States. Democracy, or lack of it, took on new meaning for a number of Citizenship School students. Solomon Brown, a students on Edisto said "We learned much of what democracy means that we did not know before. We were inspired to help others toward first-class citizenship" (Letters, 1959).

Bernice Robinson taught students to be more skeptical about what they read in the newspapers and the promises made to them by people who wanted their support. She taught lessons on how "to read between the lines" by bringing newspaper articles to the class and discussing what they really meant or what was left out. She was sensitive to the fact that many blacks on the islands had been taken advantage of, and she urged them to take a more critical view of their world and not be so accepting of what whites handed out. She urged people in class to speak up, telling them that being heard was an important part of becoming effective citizens (Tape 515A, 1965).

The ultimate evidence of empowerment, however, is action. Although Esau Jenkins was a leader in his own right, through the organization of the Citizenship Schools, Jenkins increased his influence. He encouraged Citizenship School students on six islands and two mainland communities to

start "second step" political action groups that would address issues, discuss candidates, analyze political power, and develop strategies for practical problems on the islands such as driving safety. (HFS, 1961; Second Step, 1963; Franson, 1978). Jenkin's influence spread beyond the islands through the Palmetto Voters Association and the Citizen's Committee of Charleston County. Through these organizations, Jenkins influenced candidates to listen to black needs. He pointed out that the magistrates on Johns Island who no longer assumed that blacks were guilty when they entered court because the magistrates needed black votes to get elected (Tape 515A, 1962). In 1969 Jenkins was appointed to the school board, thirteen years after he ran unsuccessfully for that same board. He is credited with being instrumental in establishing racial harmony at St. Johns High School, the integrated high school on Johns Island today. (Saunders, 1987).

Jenkins, with help from Citizenship School students and other island residents, helped establish adult education, a kindergarten, a credit union, a nursing home, a low income housing project, and The Sea Islands Comprehensive Health Center (Woodruff, 1984). Although Jenkins was killed in an automobile accident in 1972, today a number of places bear testimony to his work. The Esau Jenkins bridge between Wadmalaw and Johns Islands in particular symbolizes the strength of Jenkin's leadership as a link between people on the Sea Islands and his work to promote the welfare of all.

Septima Clark and Bernice Robinson increased their activity in the Civil Rights Movement as a result of the schools. Clark became a board member of the SCLC and a close friend of Martin Luther King Jr. A recent book about her work in the Citizenship Schools and the Civil Rights Movement was written by Cynthia Brown and entitled, Ready from within: Septima Clark and the Civil Rights Movement (1987). Robinson became a consultant for teacher-training workshops all over the South and worked on voter registration in Mississippi.

She is currently a member of Highlander's Board of Directors and recently ran for the office of state representative from her district in Charleston and narrowly lost.

Ethel Grimball, the teacher on Wadmalaw Island, also grew in her role as an activist . After serving as a Citizenship School teacher, she went became a director for Head Start, a director of programs for migrant families, and an executive assistant for the Charleston County Economic Opportunity Commission. She also helped establish an alcoholic rehabilitation clinic on Johns Island with the help of Bill Saunders and others. Today she is trying to bring more vocational education and black history into the Sea Island schools (Grimball, 1987).

On Wadmalaw Island an organization called the Board of Concerned Members of Wadmalaw Island was formed by the students of the first Citizenship School class. They helped raise the number of registered black voters from zero in the mid-1950s to over 1000 in 1973. A black woman was also elected as a precinct leader and another elected to the school board in 1973. Willie Smith, a Wadmalaw student, helped establish Second Step voter education classes and a community center on Wadmalaw (Mack, 1987).

Anderson Mack, Sr. credits the Citizenship Schools with helping him become a leader. He came to the Wadmalaw Island school as a student in his early 20's with a second grade education. Encouraged by the Citizenship School experience, he took more classes through adult education at Haut Gap High School over the next few years. Together with Citizenship School students, Willie Smith and Mary Steed, he helped establish a Community Center on Wadmalaw which sponsors a senior citizen's program today. He worked to get mail delivered to people's homes, roads paved, a kindergarten started, and more parent involvement in the local school. Each of his three

children received a college education. Today he is a community leader and works as a supervisor for the County Public Works Department (Mack, 1987).

Other students experienced greater leadership roles and autonomy in their community as a result of the schools. One student from Johns Island came to the Citizenship Schools as a cleaning woman for a white family, but she learned to read, write, and figure well enough to become bookkeeper for the Progressive Club and clerk in the cooperative store (Clark, 1962). Another student on Edisto became an officer in the Voter's Association of Edisto Island in 1961 (Bligen, 1961). Clark recalls that two were elected sheriff and one who went to college and later became a leader with Head Start in Charleston (Tjerandsen, 1980). Some earned money from the sewing and crocheting skills they had learned. Some students pursued additional schooling through adult education, as many as 50% of the class on Wadmalaw. A few eventually went to college (Tjerandsen, 1980; Mack, 1987; Grimball, 1987). But for some students the primary function of the schools was to help them develop personally and/or socially useful skills. The skills they gained in reading, writing, speaking, sewing, and crocheting enabled them to become less dependent on others and to make a greater contribution to their families. Based on the evidence from letters, tapes and interviews, I conclude that many of the students, teachers and others in the Sea Island communities were empowered because of the presence of the Citizenship Schools.[1]

The Citizenship Schools, Empowerment and Appalachia

How can the Citizenship School experience further the goal of empowerment in Appalachian schools and communities? Based on the Citizenship School example, the following conclusions are drawn:

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[1]For a more detailed discussion of the history, methodology and effect of the schools, see Oldendorf, S. B. (1987).

First, people need become more effective in addressing injustice and oppression in their lives. They, not outsiders, must identify the problems they face such as loss of mineral rights, lack of control over their own land, contaminated water, insufficient health care, and lack of employment opportunities. They must overcome "learned helplessness" and understand that they must work with each other for solutions and not depend on the government or other outsiders to help them. Part of the process of addressing injustice and oppression involves looking not only into the strengths of their own heritage but also for factors within their own families and communities that keep them powerless.

Second, people need to ask questions about the differences between democratic ideals and the realities of society. They need to become more skeptical of promises that are made to them based on the self-interest of others. They need to question who is saying what and why they are saying it. As part of a democracy they have a right to a good education for their children without sending them to a school two hours away. They have a right to a job. They have a right to clean water and affordable health care. They have a right to a part of the American dream. Accepting "what is" instead of asking "what ought to be?" only guarantees the status.

Third, people need to act to change society based on universal principles of benefit to all. To be effective, action needs to come from people working together, combining their collective ideas. People may need to attend meetings, interrogate elected officials, write letters, make phone calls, or get involved with their children's school. If residents of Appalachia do not take action, then "reform" will come from the outside and be imposed upon them.

Fourth, and most important, Appalachian schools need courageous teachers if empowerment is to become a reality. Courageous teachers will

help students identify problems affecting their lives and show them where to get help for those problems. Courageous teachers will help students realize they have a hand in their own destiny and responsibility for their own lives. Courageous teachers will include stories from the mountains, the history of the people and traditional music as part of the curriculum. Courageous teachers will help students treasure their roots and grow wings at the same time. Courageous teachers will act on the democratic ideals they try to instill in their students and not just talk about them.

The Appalachian region and the Sea Islands share problems of poverty, exploitation, and lack of good job opportunities. Appalachian schools should address these problems. They can learn from the Citizenship Schools, begun over 30 years ago, that education which questions "what is" (injustice, discrimination and oppression) and aspires to "what ought to be" (dignity, justice and freedom) is education for empowerment.

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[1]WC refers to the archives at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at Madison. HC refers to the Highlander Research and Education Center Archives in New Market, Tennessee. HFS refers to a Highlander Folk School document. B and F refer to box and folder respectively.

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